New Business Broker Startup Checklist

Your first year as a business broker: licensing, your path, tools, first listings and milestones.

FREE CHECKLIST

1. Licensing and credentials

- [ ] Check your state's business broker licensing rules
- [ ] Real estate or broker license, if required
- [ ] Professional liability (E&O) insurance
- [ ] Join the IBBA or a state broker association
- [ ] Plan your path to the CBI designation
- [ ] Ethics course and code of ethics

2. Choose your path

- [ ] **Join a firm:** ask about the split, training, who owns listings and buyers, non-compete
- [ ] **Franchise:** review the current Franchise Disclosure Document, fees and territory
- [ ] **Independent:** savings for a slow first year, legal entity, your own brand
- [ ] Talk to three brokers on each path you're considering

3. Tools

- [ ] A CRM built for business brokers
- [ ] A website that shows your listings
- [ ] Online NDAs and buyer registration
- [ ] Engagement agreement and NDA templates
- [ ] Marketplace listing accounts
- [ ] A valuation and recasting method

4. Your first listings

- [ ] List 20 referral partners: accountants, attorneys, bankers, advisors
- [ ] Tell everyone you know what you do
- [ ] Call for-sale-by-owner businesses
- [ ] Pick an industry you know to start
- [ ] Set up drip campaigns for owners not ready yet
- [ ] Co-broker with experienced brokers

5. First-year milestones

- [ ] **Month 1:** licensing, path chosen, tools set up
- [ ] **Months 1-3:** referral partners met, first listing signed
- [ ] **Months 3-6:** first buyers registered, first offers
- [ ] **Months 6-12:** first closing, pipeline of 5+ listings
- [ ] **Year end:** review what produced listings, and do more of it

Should you go solo? Ask yourself

- [ ] Have I closed deals before?
- [ ] Do I have a network?
- [ ] Can I afford a slow first year?
- [ ] Do I enjoy prospecting and marketing?
- [ ] Do I work best alone or with colleagues?
- [ ] Is my licensing in place?
- [ ] Do I have the tools?

The three paths at a glance

	Independent	Join a firm	Franchise
Commission	You keep it all	Split with the firm	Yours, minus fees
Listings and buyers	You find every one	Shared across the firm	Your own, plus a network
Training	Self-taught	Experienced brokers	Franchisor program
Startup cost	Licensing, marketing, tools	Usually low	Franchise fee plus startup
Best for	Experienced brokers	New brokers, team players	Owners who want a system

> *"If you want to make money as a business broker, be prepared to work. It's tough to start but the rewards for the good brokers are pretty amazing." Josh Factor*

> *"Me, I liked being part of a team." Lou Brill, 13 years and 100+ deals at a mid-sized firm*

General information, not legal advice. Milestones are typical goals, not guarantees. Full article: "Business Brokers Ask: Do I Go It Alone or Join a Firm?" at businessbrokerscrm.com.